



# NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

## EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) decreased two-tenths of a percentage point over the month to 3.6 percent in May as seen in Northeast Table 1. Individually, all four counties in the LMA saw slight rate decreases, with the exception of an increase of 1.0 percentage point in Butte County to 5.5 percent. Year-over-year, the LMA rate also decreased two-tenths of a percentage point. The individual counties all showed decreases except for Butte County, which experienced an increase of 2.0 percentage points. As stated in last month's issue of *Idaho Employment*, it does not take a large number change to cause a large percentage change in Butte County's unemployment statistics. With recent layoffs at the Idaho National Engineering & Environmental Laboratory (INEEL) and over the year, it was not surprising to see the increase.

In the other Northeast Idaho counties that are not part of the LMA, three counties saw larger decreases over the month: Fremont, Lemhi, and Teton Counties all experienced a 1.0 percentage point decrease or more in the unemployment rate. Teton County is finally showing a rate more reflective of 2001 rates before the September 11 events started affecting the national economy and tourism. Year-over-year, all but Clark County experienced decreases. Idaho Falls, the largest city in Northeast Idaho and the LMA, showed a decrease of four-tenths of a percentage point in the unemployment rate over the month and a decrease of three-tenths of a percentage point from one year ago.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* in the LMA increased by almost 1,200 jobs over the month. *Construction*, *Retail Trade*, *Professional & Business Services*, *Leisure & Hospitality*, and *Government Administration* all increased more than 100 jobs, with

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, and Jefferson Counties

	May 2003*	April 2003	May 2002	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	83,640	83,260	83,190	0.5	0.5
Unemployment	3,010	3,180	3,200	-5.3	-5.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.6	3.8	3.8		
Total Employment	80,620	80,080	79,990	0.7	0.8
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	83,590	81,950	83,410	2.0	0.2
Unemployment	2,490	2,930	2,690	-15.0	-7.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.0	3.6	3.2		
Total Employment	81,100	79,030	80,720	2.6	0.5
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS</b>	63,550	62,360	63,330	1.9	0.3
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	10,380	9,940	9,660	4.4	7.5
Natural Resources & Mining	70	70	80	0.0	-12.5
Construction	4,980	4,590	4,460	8.5	11.7
Manufacturing	5,330	5,280	5,120	0.9	4.1
Food Manufacturing	2,680	2,690	2,800	-0.4	-4.3
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	290	290	260	0.0	11.5
Machinery Manufacturing	470	460	420	2.2	11.9
Other Manufacturing	1,890	1,840	1,640	2.7	15.2
<b>Service-Providing Industries</b>	53,170	52,420	53,670	1.4	-0.9
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	13,970	13,850	14,630	0.9	-4.5
Wholesale Trade	4,760	4,750	5,150	0.2	-7.6
Retail Trade	7,390	7,280	7,820	1.5	-5.5
Utilities	100	100	100	0.0	0.0
Transportation	1,720	1,720	1,560	0.0	10.3
Information	820	830	970	-1.2	-15.5
Financial Activities	2,080	2,050	2,100	1.5	-1.0
Professional & Business Services	11,620	11,460	11,810	1.4	-1.6
Educational & Health Services	6,330	6,250	5,980	1.3	5.9
Leisure & Hospitality	4,830	4,660	4,830	3.6	0.0
Other Services	2,260	2,240	2,290	0.9	-1.3
Government Education	5,160	5,140	5,210	0.4	-1.0
Government Administration	6,100	5,940	5,850	2.7	4.3

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

*Construction* experiencing the largest increase at 390 jobs. Both residential and commercial construction remains strong, especially in Jefferson and Bonneville Counties. *Information* was the only industry showing job losses over the month with companies either cutting call center contracts or internalizing the work instead of contracting it out. Year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 220 jobs with gains in *Construction* (520 jobs), *Manufacturing* (210 jobs), *Educational & Health Services* (350 jobs), and *Government Administration* (250 jobs) outweighing losses in *Trade, Transportation & Utilities* (660 jobs), *Information* (150 jobs), and *Professional & Business Services* (190 jobs). These three industries can attribute losses to the national economic trends over the year.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Bonneville County

- The Artic Circle on the corner of Hitt Road and First Street in Idaho Falls is scheduled to open July 23. Owner Dave Lenon plans to hire 30 to 35 people in addition to his staff of 13 from the former First Street location, which has already been closed. Financial issues held up the opening of the new building that has been under construction for close to a year. The new location includes a large play area and equipment for children.
- World Gym in Idaho Falls moved down the street from its original location at the former Lamont's building on North Yellowstone Avenue only months ago, but will now be moving back. Now under new management (Saratoga Management), a leasing agreement was made with Developers Diversified Realty to return to the former location. The gym will add new exercise equipment and will remodel the space to add a front counter and lounge area. World Gym also purchased a license from Apex Fitness Group to run their exercise and nutrition program.
- Records Management, a subsidiary of Security Connections, Inc. of Idaho Falls, is building a second storage facility next to its existing facility on International Way. The state-of-the-art records management facility will add 15,000-square feet of storage capacity and is scheduled for completion in October. The company stores and manages medical, government, legal, and business records, along with providing support services for each industry. The records stored there can be imaged and made available on a secure website for customer viewing on local desktops with the "Scan on Demand" program. These reports and images are made available around the clock. Pick up and delivery services are also offered. The company has existed in Idaho Falls for the past nine years.
- Chris Hertz has been named president and CEO of the Eastern Idaho Economic Development Council (EIEDC). He has been acting president for the council since May when president Jim Bowman was placed on administrative leave. Hertz has an impressive work history, which includes being an architect, the public affairs manager at the INEEL, project manager for CH2M Hill, acting president and now CEO of EIEDC. Hertz has set two goals for the council: help existing businesses in eastern Idaho, and aggressively pursue companies that might want to relocate to the area. He strongly believes in teaming up with economic development leaders in the area (Rexburg through Pocatello and

beyond) to promote the area and the Technology Corridor, just as Bowman did as president.

### Jefferson County

- Rigby claims a new employer—1-877-FILECARD—that allows clients to safely store personal information and then retrieve it at any time of day anywhere in the world via the Internet. The services are in great demand from a variety of people who want access to this information while away from home. Such information might include PIN numbers, credit card numbers, safe combinations, expiration dates, and passwords. This information would also be available in the case of fire or flood or robbery. The information is encrypted and stored in a computer-based system. The cost is \$12 per year for 10 items and \$2 for each additional item.

### Lemhi County

- Elderhostel, a non-profit travel organization for older adults, recently provided a great service to the Sacajawea Center in Salmon. The group of 29 people each paid \$500 to work, and work they did. They built a bridge, arbors, benches, and fences; they pruned, weeded, and planted trees; they remodeled an old barn that will become the community theater, with hired teenage help. Group members say their momentum and energy comes from other people who appreciate their work, and they were happy to help the community in their selfless endeavors. It also helped the community prepare the interpretive center for its grand opening in August. The volunteer workers of Elderhostel make it a practice to be of service while vacationing throughout the United States and abroad. This group was comprised of retired people from all walks of life, including engineers and electricians. The group was able to enjoy some recreation in the area after their six-hour work days by taking a scenic float trip on the Salmon River, taking a guided horseback ride, and visiting the local museum. Besides helping the Salmon area, the group has revegetated areas in the Grand Canyon, tutored on a New Mexico American Indian reservation, and worked on a historic preservation project at Glacier National Park. For more information about the group, visit [www.elderhostel.org](http://www.elderhostel.org) or call (406) 683-7537 at the University of Montana-Western.

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